

King County Sheriff's Office
Strategic Business Plan
2006 Budget Update

JULY 15, 2005

Foreword by Sheriff Sue Rahr



With the 2005-2010 Strategic Operations Plan, the King County Sheriff's Office embraces the challenges of providing superior public service to the residents of King County.

In the next several years, King County will likely experience rapid and dramatic changes to the governance structure in urban unincorporated communities. These changes will have significant ramifications for the Sheriff's Office as the balance of our population served transitions from unincorporated areas to cities. Further, demands for our services will continue to require creativity as we find ways to do more with less.

I have three clear priorities for the Sheriff's Office:

- Keeping our families safe and secure while maintaining the public trust.
- Ensuring the security of our cities, businesses and neighborhoods.
- Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the Sheriff's Office.

To prepare us to meet the changing demands, the Sheriff's Office will undertake many new strategies and improve upon existing services. These efforts come from an intensive planning project that has involved reviewing our operating environment and rewriting our vision, mission, goals, and strategies.

Our efforts also have included the development of a new performance measurement system so that we can evaluate the effectiveness of our operations. That system will be put into place in the coming years.

Our planning process is ongoing, so our business plan reflects draft strategies and historical measures of performance. We intend to continue our improvement process in partnership with other King County officials and agencies in the coming year.

This plan serves as a public promise that we will continue to strive for unparalleled excellence and effectiveness, and will place great value on our role as a regional leader in collaborative law enforcement.

I look forward to meeting with you, hearing from you, and working with you in the years to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sue Rahr". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Sheriff Sue Rahr
King County Sheriff's Office

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Summary

The Sheriff's Office is the chief law enforcement agency in King County, and provides regional, local unincorporated, and contract police services. The agency's functions vary widely to meet the differing needs of communities, as well as legal mandates.

Department at a Glance

Department Function	Law enforcement services	
Population Served	Regional services -- all county residents Local and contract services -- 576,455	
Contracts	12 cities Metro Transit KC International Airport Muckleshoot Tribe	Forest Service Schools Marine Patrol Other
2005 Budget	\$123.4 million (including AFIS and Drug Forfeiture)	
2005 Revenue	\$60.7 million	
Employees	718 Sworn, 365.5 Professional (including AFIS)	

Business Direction

Element	Statements
Policy Direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Sheriff is chief law enforcement officer in the county, is elected by all county voters, and is responsible to all residents regardless of jurisdiction. The Sheriff's Office is sworn to uphold all county, state, and municipal laws throughout the county. Changing crimes, increasing needs for homeland security, a mandate for community policing, and the regional nature of criminal activity require ongoing development of personnel, abilities, customer service, and partnerships. The Sheriff's Office has an obligation to meet law enforcement needs in a cost effective manner without compromising public safety.
Vision	Our vision is to improve public safety by leading and promoting collaboration and professionalism in the criminal justice system.
Mission	The mission of the King County Sheriff's Office is to provide quality, professional, regional and local law enforcement services tailored to the needs of individual communities to improve the quality of life.
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build trust and support within the community groups, government, and the profession that we serve. Maintain safe and healthy communities by reducing crime and the fear of crime; effectively responding to critical incidents; and improving traffic safety. Provide accountable and cost-effective law enforcement services. Promote a highly skilled workforce.
Core Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Law Enforcement Response and Criminal Investigations Contract Service Provision Law Enforcement Support Services Business Management Countywide and Regional Specialty Services Public Interaction

Change Dynamics

- *Annexation Activity:*
 - The “top ten” annexation areas represent about one-third of the population served by the Sheriff’s Office, and represent a significant portion of workload for many units. Changes will affect staffing needs, economies of scale, the contract program, regional vs. local services, cross-dispatching, and officer and public safety.
 - The post-annexation unincorporated population (estimated 165,000 people) is the equivalent of the 4th largest city in the state, based on 2004 data. These citizens will live in an area that is hundreds of square miles, with a mix of suburban and rural characteristics. The primary concerns of residents are property crimes and drug activity, with traffic (especially speeding) being a concern in the more heavily populated areas.
- *Customers:*
 - Almost two-thirds (64%) of people served by the KCSO generally think their police are doing an excellent or good job and another 26% believe the police are performing at a satisfactory level.
 - The existing contracts are in an automatic rollover phase, and are effective until terminated or renegotiated.
 - There is limited new contract potential with municipalities. Other opportunities include colleges, SROs, and specialty unit contracts.
 - Law enforcement is highly subject to variations in public sentiment. In recent years, circumstances have quickly lead to increased public demand for emphasis on gangs, drugs, sex offenders, domestic violence, community policing, racial profiling, and homeland security.
 - The increasing diversity of the region means that we need to develop more specialized cultural and language skills.
- *Economic conditions:*
 - Although the Sheriff’s Office has experienced relatively modest unit cost growth, cost is still a concern for contracts.
 - As cities experience downturns in their economic forecasts, more may turn to mergers or city-to-city contracts for police services. For certain policing activities, our participation in task forces has been a logical and cost-effective alternative to individual agencies attempting provision of the same service.
 - Due to Federal budget deficits, the long-term grant picture is noticeably bleaker.
 - A new AFIS levy will be subject to voter approval in 2006 and the growth in revenue during the next levy would be subject to the same legal limitations on property tax increases for the other purposes.
 - Various actions at the state level, such as sales tax equalization and utility taxes to support annexation, will affect the budgets and initiatives of King County and our contract cities.

- *Crime Trends:*
 - There has been little change in the amount of crime in King County and our cities over the past seven years (1997-2004). Violent crime has been flat or on a slight downward trend for the last several years. The long term trend for Part I property crimes is flat or slightly downward, but the last 3 years show increasing numbers in these types of crime.
 - Much of the burglary, larceny, auto theft, fraud, and identity theft crime has some level of 'meth'-related involvement. Drug addiction and alcohol abuse are significant 'drivers' for crimes like burglary, larceny, fraud, auto theft, identity theft and domestic violence.
 - Mental health issues are increasingly of concern throughout the criminal justice system and require innovative approaches.
 - The registered sex offender population continues to rise, and several levels of government have mandated requirements for assessing risk and monitoring these individuals.

- *Staffing Considerations:*
 - Over two-thirds of current commissioned staff will become eligible for retirement within the next 10 years; many of these individuals are in leadership or highly specialized positions. This will become more challenging in the future when combine with our typical attrition rates and recruiting challenges.
 - Over the past five years, professional attrition rates have ranged from 5% to 10%. The potential for significant knowledge gaps resulting from retirements or career changes is very real since some key staff members have held the same (or similar) position for 20 or more years.
 - Although we need to train both commissioned and professional staff, current budget constraints severely limit the KCSO's ability to provide training. WAC 139-05-300 will mandate that as of January 1, 2006 that all LE will attend 24 hours of in-service training per calendar year. Additional training mandates exist.
 - The Sheriff's Office must comply with a complex array of human resources, medical, retirement, and risk management regulations.

- *Technology:*
 - Currently, there is no department equipment replacement plan for computers and related equipment. Many computers used in unincorporated areas and by shared staff are out of warranty; even a reduction in force probably would not provide sufficient computers under warranty for remaining staff.
 - The Sheriff's Office has significant participation in regional technology initiatives for law enforcement information sharing.

- *Facilities:*
 - The Sheriff's Office is in the process of collaboratively developing an Operational Master Plan, which will guide the development of a formal Facilities Master Plan. Current priorities are the relocation of the Criminal Investigations and Special Operations Divisions.

Performance Measures

A new system of performance measures is currently in development with the assistance of a consulting firm. The measures will be based on national best practices and will allow for some comparisons to peer agencies. The new system supports the countywide system and criteria and follows the practices used successfully by other police agencies.